



Afghanistan: Supporting girls and young women through sport

Context

For over 30 years, the situation in Afghanistan has been marked by armed conflict and ethnic tensions. Almost half of the population of approximately 30 million people is under 15 years old. Several million children in Afghanistan have little or no access to education, sports and leisure activities and cultural institutions. The quality of education is also very variable. The situation for women and girls is particularly difficult. Despite the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001, they have remained largely excluded from public life and from sporting and cultural activities.

The 'Sport for Development' approach

The United Nations recognise sport internationally 'as a means to promote education, health, development and peace'. German development cooperation also uses the opportunities offered by 'Sport for Development'. Sport allows children and young people to lead healthy lives, and it teaches them to take on responsibility, behave fairly and resolve conflict peacefully. These are key skills that will later help them gain a foothold in the working world. German development cooperation trains coaches for this purpose. They are role models and figures the young people can trust. The coaches give the children and young people a stronger sense of self-esteem and help them develop prospects for the future. During training, they address health-related topics such as HIV prevention and alcohol abuse. Sport is not just physical exercise, it is part of their education. Together with local and international partners from the fields of policy-making, civil society, business and academia, Ger-

man development cooperation has built up a sustainable sport portfolio that also helps strengthen civil society and promote democracy. In this way, sport serves as an innovative instrument that drives change and sustainable development – for each individual child and for society as a whole.

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Project area	Kabul, Balkh, Samangan
Partners	Afghan Ministry for Education (MoE), Physical Education Directorates (PED) of the Afghan provincial governments, GIZ Basic Education Programme for Afghanistan (BEPA) and others
Overall term	Early 2015 to late 2017

'Sport for Development' in Afghanistan

As in other countries, sport is one of the most popular leisure activities in Afghanistan. Despite this, there are very few opportunities for people to get involved through sports associations. Girls and young women in particular need safe spaces to take part in exercise and sports. Schools are one of the few places where this is possible. However, they lack teaching plans, sports equipment, infrastructure and well-trained physical education teachers, especially female teachers.

The training of physical education teachers is therefore a central component of the 'Sport for Development' activities being carried out in Afghanistan in the context of German development cooperation. The long-term aim is to provide more and better physical education at girls' schools. To this end, in cooperation



'Sport for Development' makes it possible for girls and young women in Afghanistan to take up sport and gives them access to education.

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with the Afghan Ministry of Education and local partners, a plan was developed enabling ten people to qualify as 'master coaches'. The participants have learned how to use sport as a means of personal development and how to adapt sports activities to the local context and make optimal use of local resources. The new techniques they have acquired help them in their everyday teaching, for example in adapting activities that are designed for use on large sports grounds to a small classroom situation. These multipliers are now running training courses for physical education teachers at several pilot schools in Mazar-e-Sharif and Kabul. For the girls and young women involved, this type of school sports education trains both their motor skills, such as hand-eye coordination and balance, and their cognitive and social skills, such as creativity, decision-making, time management, communication and cooperation. In this way, school-based physical education helps girls and women to gain greater social and professional independence, thus bringing the goal of gender equality one step closer.

Curricula for physical education in school

Alongside teacher training, curriculum development is another key area being addressed by German development cooperation agencies in Afghanistan. On behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH runs a 'Basic Education Programme for Afghanistan' (BEPA), which aims to improve the quality of education. In particular, the programme helps the directorate of teacher's training of the Afghan Ministry of Education to establish effective knowledge management systems and develop appropriate teaching methods. There is no dedicated training for primary school teachers at Afghanistan's teacher training colleges, although a course is currently being developed.

In 2016, with the help of the 'Sport for Development' programme, work began on a separate curriculum for physical education as an independent subject, and this is now in the test phase. The basic teaching concept, aimed at young children, includes sports and other games designed to promote exercise

from all over the world. It is adapted to local circumstances and the facilities and resources available in the schools in question. Teaching materials have been developed for use within a curriculum based on physical activity and an educational approach to sport.

Partners

German development cooperation activities in the field of 'Sport for Development' in Afghanistan are carried out in cooperation with the following organisations:

- Physical Education Directorate (PED) of the Afghan Ministry of Education (MoE)
- Education departments of the Afghan provincial governments
- GIZ Basic Education Programme for Afghanistan (BEPA)
- Scientific advice from the German Sport University Cologne (DSHS)

Success to date

- Teaching staff from 58 pilot schools in Kabul and Mazar-e-Sharif have participated in training measures to improve and expand the range of physical education lessons. Around 87,000 pupils have benefited so far from the programme. The schools are provided with the necessary sports equipment.
- A tutorial DVD has been developed, featuring sports activities and exercise-related games adapted to local circumstances. With the help of the Physical Education Directorate (PED) of the Afghan Education Ministry, the intention is to use the DVD at over 10,000 schools across the country.
- As part of the curriculum development process for physical education within the primary school teacher training course, the programme has developed a teaching concept for primary schools based on the needs of small children. This is accompanied by teaching materials that promote physical activity and an educational approach to sports. The concept is currently being tested in schools.

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